

Good afternoon. It's great to be back in Jacksonville, I was at dolphin point this morning with HHS Secretary Alex a czar very good visit they're doing a great job there. And since I was in town, since we did this last Friday with a new announcement I figured, we'll do it again so I want to thank Mayor Lenny curry for being here. I also want to thank Dr. Bonnie white, she's a pediatrician and actually our pediatrician so so thanks. Dr. White for participating. I'm pleased today to announce that effective immediately Florida will be lifting all restrictions on youth activities, including summer camp and athletics.

We believe that that this is, that makes sense based on the data and observed experience. We are not going to be instituting a lot of rules or really any rules, the Department of Health have put some questions that people have questions, we'll have some Q and A's put up some other things maybe some best practice, but at the end of the day, you know we trust the parents to be able to make decisions in conjunction with physicians and community leaders and coaches, to be able to do these activities in a way that are safe. But I think our kids have been out of organized activities for a couple months now, and I think that that we need to have a pathway to get it back.

When you look at how the virus has affected the state of Florida. Here's some some interesting statistics. We in the state of Florida have observed zero fatalities under the age of 25 throughout the entire course of the pandemic. We have also observed more total fatalities. for people aged 90 or above than total fatalities for those under the age of 65. Let me say that again: Florida's had more COVID fatalities over 90 years of age than all the fatalities under 65 combined. And so, we obviously, understand that this virus has a disproportionate impact on on the elderly. And fortunately, we've not seen anyone under 25 die with COVID.

I think it's also important to point out some of the things that we've now observed. When, when the whole pandemic started in the country moved into mitigation. The schools went to distance learning here in Florida and many other parts of the country. There was some known about it I think it was pretty clear that kids were less likely to suffer serious clinical outcomes from this, then then elderly were a really wasn't known what role kids would play in terms of vectors of transmission. So I think there was a lot of concern there was understandable that maybe the kids aren't going to suffer generally negative outcomes but maybe they can infect teachers or parents or whatnot so so the distance learning I think was premised on that, and it was basically using an influence a model. With influenza if you have an outbreak, the kids in schools they meet together intermingle it's kind of a petri dish, it can get spread and then they can be really major vectors for community transition of influenza.

I think what we've seen is that's probably not exactly how this coronavirus has ended up working out now, it's important to point out to folks that kids are not immune from this I mean some kids have been infected and some kids have ended up, you know, critically ill, there have been some not a lot in the United States, who have died. I think though the data is pretty clear that for whatever reason, kids don't seem to get infected at the same rates that some other adults get infected. And I also think it's pretty clear and CDC just put something out about this, that kids

are at much less risk for hospitalizations, than they would be during the typical flu season, CDC put out in its most recent update. Kids are much less likely to be hospitalized due to COVID, then at similar points in the influenza season. So that's just something to put in perspective for folks.

And if you look at all the studies that have been done in particularly a lot of countries in Europe, you have Iceland you have Switzerland, you have the Netherlands. So look at Sweden, and then Australia, even as looked at this, that kids don't seem to be major vectors of transmission. Most of the epidemiological investigations those countries have done in their studies have found that kids usually will get infected by adults, they didn't find as many examples of kids infecting adults and again, this is still a novel virus, you have these studies that are being undertaken. It's -- I think the evidence all points in that direction. And I would also know we kept daycares open in the state of Florida, CDC had recommended that those be closed. I didn't practically see away that you could close daycares given we have so many health care workers who were rely it, and we didn't see you know any major problems with the daycares and so those are just kind of some of the data points that I think if you look at the experience in Europe. If you look at the experience in the United States, you know that we can say it is really kind of the picture that we're looking at here.

So I think that a lot of parents are going to be interested in being able to have their kids be involved in activities but at the same time. This is a parent's decision no parent is required to have their kid if you don't feel comfortable with it, then don't do it and that's fine and I think that the parents are in the best places to make those decisions. We are I think progressing well as a state overall, we've reported the last five days if you look at the percentage of tests that have been coming back positive in Florida. May 17 was 3.17% 18, 1.87% 5/19 0.63% of all the tests came back positive. That's over 99% coming back negative. 5/20, 2.44%, and then I think today's positivity is something like 2.8%, so we're really, really getting a lot of negative results, and the positive results tend to be in long term care facilities because we're doing a big push to test they're in prisons. And then in some communities which are, you know, more close living arrangements. So, there have been cases in Immokalee there have been cases in Martin County, and some of those communities, but I think that's been a pretty consistent pattern that we've been able to observe.

Since we entered phase one, the number of people hospitalized in the ICU, with COVID for COVID has declined by 26%. Since we started phase one the number of people on ventilators for COVID has declined 34%, so we appreciate those trends Florida has now received over 115,000 test results reported to the state of Florida throughout this time period. So that's, that's a testament to a lot of the folks who've been really working hard on that. PPE. We've now sent out with the Department of Emergency Management, almost 27 million masks to hospitals and long term care facilities, almost 11 million gloves. 1.7 million face shields over a million shoe covers than we've said gowns hand sanitizer goggles coveralls, so it's been the biggest logistics mission in the history of the state, but I think it's something that's been very very worthwhile, particularly with the long term care facilities.

We were with Vice President Pence I think yesterday, delivering or two days ago delivering PPE. We've been delivering PPE for a while now because we understood that if you can limit the transmission in the long term care facilities, you're going to have less people end up hospitalized, which I think is a really good thing. Since I instituted the quarantine of people coming from New York. We have screened almost 80,000 travelers both by air and by car who have left hot zones like the New York City area. And if you look at the analysis now Florida was the number one place where people fled that hot zone to to come to the state of Florida, that quarantine I think deterred more from coming, but then limited the spread, once it got here, and I think that that was really critical in reducing the number of infections and the number of in the number of casualties.

So I hope that that this will be good for folks over the summer, you know, our view and the state level and as I said, Department of Health, we'll be putting out, just some general FAQs and some general things to think about. But I really trust, parents, I trust the physicians who work with the kids. I trust our local leaders I trust the coaches and the people are involved in these camps, you know, to really do things in a way that keep people safe. I think that's a much better approach than having the state government do 100 rules for tennis camp, because you know what, it's just some of these things don't end up being very sensible at all. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to the mayor have him say a few things and I'll turn it over to Dr. White and we'll answer a few questions.

MAYOR CURRY TALKS

Well thanks mayor and, you know, as we were thinking about the announcement. My message is look: Talk to your talk to your doctors talk to that and so I thought about what I would I do as a parent well, Casey and I have three kids and we would talk to talk to our pediatrician. So we asked Dr. White if she would come and just talk about, kind of, you know, she's seeing with kids, not only in terms of the coven but some of the things that that may be impacting our youth as a result of some of the mitigation in the school closures and in the light. So Dr. White thank you for being willing to come and the floor is yours.

DR. WHITE TALKS

Thank you Dr. White can you. I know you guys really worked hard during when this happened about not letting the immunizations fall behind with your patients. That has not been the case statewide or nationwide. So can you talk about the importance of getting the immunizations and and what type of health risks we could be seeing, public health risks, if if a lot of kids fall behind?

DR. WHITE ANSWERS THAT QUESTION

Mayor, can you just say, you mentioned it about the people, parents, talking to you what, what's your sense of how, you know, the yearning, if there, is for having some activities. I mean it's been tough, kids have been at home, Virtual Education, distance learning, taken out of the routine, obviously the kids who were in the, in the high schools have their seasons cut short if they're in athletics if they're doing school events canceled the seniors didn't graduate. Is this something that you think a lot of parents are really going to be going to be happy that they're going to have the opportunity to do?

CURRY ANSWERS THAT QUESTION

Q and A STARTS

QUESTION ABOUT MULTISYSTEM INFLAMMATORY SYNDROME

DeSantis largely lets Dr. White answer the question. But then adds:

Well, look, I think on this. There have been things put out by CDC, the Florida Department of Health put something out. I think it's something parents should consider. You know, it is extremely rare and then there's other health organizations like Cleveland Clinic came out and said, we've seen a couple cases but it's not anything out of the ordinary. That was their view, others have said otherwise, so I think people can just take a look at that and then make the decisions that they think is best for them.

QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER THE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE LIFTED STATEWIDE

So we are lifting the state restrictions on it. Locals can do as they see fit. I'm not preventing them from being able to do anything, but I just think it makes more sense for them to take these, I mean, I don't think different regions of the state what even approach it the same way. And I think that a lot of the individual activities, to say here that what you have to do and then apply that to, they can apply it to tennis, apply it to all these things, I just I don't know that we'd be able to even come up (with) one.

But I think there's going to be things that are going to be put on the Department of Health website, a lot of frequently asked questions things to think about. CDC also has things, but I think it's a better approach to let people like the mayor work with his groups locally, and then figure out you know what makes the best sense, because I just think that I've seen other jurisdictions other states do like 100 rules for like how to pick up a tennis ball and all this and it's like you know that's just when you do that and you overcook it, you end up getting less compliance with it, because people just throw up their hands and say some of this is ridiculous.

I think it's just, we trust parents to use common sense we trust our local officials, we trust the doctors that work with the folks day to day on a local basis to fashion this in a way that is safe. I don't think as a parent, you know I wouldn't want my kids being involved in things now but I'd be

comfortable that, but if for some reason I didn't think it was safe and my wife didn't then obviously we wouldn't do it and so, so that's how we'll do. But it does not prevent a county wants to do certain types of restrictions that they think makes sense to channel it, but they are free to do that.

QUESTION ABOUT UNEMPLOYMENT

Right, so. So we've now paid out about \$2.8 billion in the last 10 weeks, so that's more than the state of Florida paid out in the previous five years combined. So we're getting close to having paid a million applicants, I think for sure by the time the weekend's over we'll be we'll be over that as I think most of you know, we basically had a million unemployed year over a year at front by the end of last month. So, so it's been a really really top priority to be able to do it.

Now, there have been some folks who had some problems with applications do is work with them to try to get that in good order and obviously we want to help as many people as we can.

I'm also looking at what they're going to do in this next federal bill. And one of the things the ideas that are floated around which I think would make sense is is because you know you had people that were laid off because of the mitigation, who probably could go back to work pretty soon. If the industry gets back up, but may not have the financial incentive to do it so I think that they should consider letting people take a full lump sum like if they are entitled to a certain amount of money over however many weeks, just give it to them, and then let people go back to work so they get the big lump sum unemployment, and they can go back to work and make money that way, that could create a good incentive to get people back in the workforce, so I know that's been talked about a little bit in Washington. And I think it makes sense. Yeah technically not everyone would need to exhaust the unemployment maybe they would go back to work sooner but you remove any of the concerns about any disincentives and so I think that they should consider that and I think a lot of workers would really appreciate it.

QUESTION ON FLORIDA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Well, obviously we we knew it was gonna be significant significant and so it's it's been really difficult. I remember when the mitigation started getting the unemployment report which we knew was going to change very quickly but it was 2.8%, just two months ago, in terms of the report and then for this one. So I think what we have to do, and one of the reasons why I wanted to do a safe, smart, step by step approach to recovery is that if we can get people back to work, get some confidence back in the communities, you'll start to see. Hopefully, a lot of these jobs be recovered. I mean, you look at some of them just look at the theme parks, you know that's over 100,000 jobs is from the theme parks, we now I think Universal has submitted a plan to reopen and it was endorsed by Orange County, so I'm going to be reviewing that.

We met with the vice president we had Disney, SeaWorld all those others. So there's definitely a path to get a lot of those people back to work, and that's what we have to do. And so that's why

our whole plan is built on obviously keeping people safe and making sure that we're doing what it takes to protect our nursing homes, long term care facilities all that with respect to the virus, but but understanding that this emitted that this national mitigation that happened, has come at a major, major cost, and we've got to work hard to get it back going so I'd like to see the economy bounce back as quickly as possible. But I also know it's just not that simple. There's confidence there's other things, some of these businesses even with the PPP although some of them got loans from the state. So it's very difficult, you're going to have businesses that probably aren't going to be able to open again. Now we're going to be working on some other small business aid that may make a difference there. But, but, but it's a it's a it's a dramatic change. We've never seen a change this dramatic this quick, probably in American history.

My hope is though is that as states like Florida, Texas others move forward, that we can kind of help lead the way in recovery.

FOLLOW UP QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER THE RATE HAS PEAKED

I hope it has, I mean but I think you have to look at. I mean, what second order shocks happen. I'm not saying that is gonna happen but the, I think that we're in a, we're in uncharted waters and so we can do our best to, to provide the pathway back to to work for people. That is really, I think, you know what what we need to be doing. And I'm, I, look I think a lot of people are itching to get back into it I we had the meeting with the hospitality folks and the vice president a couple days ago clearly that's a bread and butter thing for Florida but I would note that even the CDC recently came out and said things like pools, there's no real risk of transmission with the virus there, so we have different water parks and things that people like to do, obviously, the beaches, is something that people want to come to Florida fishing, boating, all those things, and all that stuff, you know, seems like it's very very low risk obviously we remember the stuff that was thrown in Jacksonville, and you haven't seen any, any outbreaks or anything from that and so, so we do have a pathway back but it's but it's not gonna be easy.

And what I tried to do there at this whole time and was criticized for relentlessly was have a lighter touch because. Had I took some approaches that were more Draconian I think you'd see those numbers be way worse. Without question it would be way worse. And so we tried to mitigate that as best as we could obviously when the national shutdown was happening that had to affect Florida because you're gonna have fewer people that are going to come down here, but we really worked hard to mitigate it because I understood that, that when you're doing these measures, it's not it's not free. And very few people were talking about what could happen on the other end I was one of the few that that was willing to do that.

QUESTION ABOUT A PLAN OF SOME SORT, IT'S INAUDIBLE

so if you so we monitor the the numbers every day, hour by hour day by day. And we've seen for a month pretty consistently, that if you see anything out of just a trickle in these counties, southeast Florida's got a little more but anywhere else, anytime anything moves up, it's been

either a long term care facility -- which isn't the worst thing in the world because we're offensively going in testing people that aren't even symptomatic. And it's amazing if you look at these the long term care. There's a number of seniors that aren't symptomatic, you would think that as soon as they got it they'd be in the ICU, but that's not that's fortunately not the case. So we're identifying cases doing that, we're identifying cases in prisons. We've had hundreds of prison cases over the last week or so. So anytime you see any of these rural counties in North Florida. If there's 50 cases, you pretty much can bet your bottom dollar it's a prison.

And then we've taken testing into areas like Immokalee and other parts that were underserved. So what you'll do is you will start identifying cases then it tends to really drop off from there, and then anytime I think the only time we've seen any type of increase has been with these data dumps. So about a week ago we can have we got 400 cases that were backlogged from Miami, positive cases from three weeks ago. I think yesterday, we got we got 55,000 test results, but I think there were the bulk of those or at least that strong minority were Miami, some of those were backed up from a lab. So you just look inside the data.

But I think what we've seen is our positivity rate is very very low, and we're going to continue to see and go in that direction and even though we've expanded testing dramatically. You know you're not seeing as many cases as you did at the end of, at the beginning of April, and so that's I think that that's a good sign. And I would also just note that there's some states that did draconian policies, and you see them, and they they have spikes. They have massive spikes in places like Illinois. I mean Michigan has had a lot of problems, Michigan is half of Florida's size. They've got like, 5,000-plus fatalities.

We have about 21, 2,200 fatalities and we're twice their size. Illinois, major sports and they have as stringent policies as you can. So I think a more moderate approach is more effective with the virus. But I also think it's more effective at getting people back to work and getting getting the society functioning again.

So we'll, you know we monitored all the time we have the ability to contact trace and isolate on a local level when that's needed, but I think it's just, man if you just continue working with these long term care facilities that really does seem to be where we're most of this ballgame is and I think from the very beginning we put a lot of emphasis on that. They're just now starting to talk about it. And I still don't think they really want to at least at the national level, but but we had a choice here in Florida with long term care facilities knowing we were ground zero for this with our, with our older population, do you do, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan approach, which is take a COVID-positive patient, out of the hospital and force them back into the nursing home, or do you do what Florida did and said, actually, you cannot return a COVID positive patient back to the nursing home? And the difference is, when you send the COVID-positive patient back to the nursing home, it spreads in the nursing home to the most vulnerable people in our society, massive infections, obviously huge numbers of fatalities in Florida. We kept it out of that and we're able to reduce the number of infections and reduce the

fatalities in those facilities and so those are just the type of things that that really really make a difference. And so we're going to continue along that along that way.

But I do think that I mean in Jacksonville, could things have really, I mean I, look it's not easy but I think things have trended is about as good as could be reasonably expected. Anytime you guys see cases, it's usually connected with a long term care facility and and that's been our number one priority but understand. That's a discrete issue. A prison is a discrete issue. That doesn't mean you can have people going back to work, because as we've seen, there were states that did really significant clamp downs on their general population and put the nursing homes in jeopardy and they failed.

And then I think Florida was more moderate but really focused on nursing homes and had more success so, but I think Northeast Florida has really done well. A lot of people were saying what is that now over a month ago month and a half ago, how everything was going to be so bad here, never happened. And no one talks about it anymore it's like, you come through you do a drive by smear from out of state, and then you just move on. And then when it's clear you were wrong there's never any opportunity or interest in correcting the record or showing that you were wrong. You just kind of go off and you find the next community to smear. Well I don't forget that what they did to people of Jacksonville, and so the things that they said about them and and I've been pointing out just how wrong some of these people were from the very beginning because I knew Mayor Curry was doing it right. And I know that people here were going about it the right way. Thanks everybody.